

# *LIBERATOR*

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ISSUE

Black Colleges Need Us  
editorial

Letter From Prison

Revolt of the Natives

Black Poets



Faces at a Yoruba Wedding



# LIBERATOR

Vol 11 Nos 1&2 January-February 1971

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Cover photo: Richard Reaves

### LIBERATOR Readers:

Due to mechanical printing difficulties, we have been forced to combine the January and February issues.

We hope to make this up with a special issue in the fall.

# Black Colleges Need Us

As I travel from Maine to California, I am constantly being bombarded with: "Why can't your people do like us and pull themselves up by their own bootstraps!" This warmed-over soggy bit of advice is generally offered by white liberals whose parents came from Eastern Europe. What they conveniently neglect to remember is that when the dominant WASP society refused to allow them access into the mainstream of American life, they didn't hesitate to ride into niggertown and solicit our numbers as friends in order to bolster their own economic, political, and social positions with the WASPs. We were their bootstraps. Of course, now that our "friends" are being permitted to nibble around at the edges of the giant loaf of bread that is America, they condescendingly speak of all they did for us (civil rights) and decry our ingratitude in not being willing to serve forever at their feet. As is the case with most half-truths, these utterances by our self-imposed "friends" do contain some basis in fact. While exploiting our numbers, they did build institutions that would help them survive. We in the Afro-American community, after three centuries of being spoon-fed with welfare and hand-outs, have yet to build any lasting institution outside of the negro church.

For the last two years Black college administrators have been criticizing the Nixon Administration for neglecting to provide substantial funds for the predominantly Black colleges in the South. Finally, last September 1970, the Administration released \$30,000,000 for use by these schools with two main stipulations: (1) schools had to provide 30% in matching funds to the 70% aid by the grant; and (2) if the schools could not produce enough matching funds to take advantage of the total grant by March 15, 1971, then any unused amount would also become available to white colleges on the same 30-70 basis.

At this writing, only three Black schools have found themselves able to take advantage of this grant. Benedict College in Columbia, S.C., St. Augustine's College in Raleigh, N.C., and Voorhees Junior College in Denmark, S.C., have received the grand total of \$2,028,000. This leaves a balance of about \$28,000,000.

**QUESTION:** Where are all those militant Black Nationalists in show business who, while commanding large salaries, love to scream Black at fund-raising events for white causes? Where are all those J&B/El Dorado/wheeling/big-time/negroes with their talk of *Support Your Own* and *Buy Black*? Where are all those angry and anti-white Black educators who when last seen were jetting north to the fat and prestigious white universities where they can better rap Black to white students?

**ANSWER:** Yes, there are some things we can do for ourselves. We can begin right now by supporting those Black colleges in the South that survived on short bread, sometimes no bread, in order to help educate us when no one else would. If we are now on the verge of understanding the forces of oppression, and a few of us are beginning to think in terms of building lasting institutions rather than momentary self-aggrandizement schemes, it is due in no small part to these Black schools.

It is up to us. Will we organize drives now to raise the necessary matching funds for Government aid to our Black Schools and participate in a real effort at nation building? Or will we continue to beg for entry into white colleges, ignoring the power we have in our hands -- the Black power to save, to reclaim a genuine Black heritage, legacy, the Black college in the United States?

DANIEL H. WATTS





George Jackson.

My father is in his forties today; 35 years ago he was living through his most formative years. He was a child of the "Great" Depression. I want you to notice for later reference

that I emphasize and differentiate "Great" Depression. There were many more international, national and regional depressions during the period in history relevant to this

# LETTER FROM PRISON

BY GEORGE JACKSON

comment.

My father developed his character, conventions, convictions, his traits, his lifestyle, out of a situation that began with his mother

running out. She left him and his oldest brother on the corner of one of the canyons in East St. Louis; they raised themselves -- in the streets, on a farm somewhere in

Louisiana, in CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) camps. My father had no formal education at all (he taught himself the essentials later on). Alone, in the most hostile jungle on earth, ruled over by the King of Beasts, a rabid beast, long gone mad, and in the first throes of a bloody and protracted death. Alone, in the most savage moment in history, without arms, and burdened by a Black face that he's been hiding ever since.

I love this Brother. my father, and when I use the word "love" in these comments I am not making an attempt at rhetoric. I am attempting to express a refulgent, unrestrained emanation from the deepest, most durable region of my soul, an unshakable thing that I have never questioned. But no one can come through the ordeal of being, when he did, without suffering the penalty of psychosis; it was the price of survival. I would venture that there are no healthy Brothers of his generation, *none at all*.

He has reached the prime of life without ever showing in my presence (or anywhere, to my knowledge) an overt manifestation of *real* sensitivity, affection or sentiment.

He has lived his entire life in a state of shock. Nothing can touch him now; his calm is complete, his immunity to pain is total. When I can fix his eyes--which is not often, since when they aren't closed they are shaded--but when I can fix them, staring back at me is the expressionless mask of the Zombie.

But he must have loved us, of this I am certain. Part of the credo of the neo-slave, the latter-day slave, who is free to move from place to place if he can come by the means, is to shuffle away from any situation that becomes too difficult. But he stayed with us, worked sixteen hours a day, after which he would eat, bathe and sleep--period.

He has never owned more than two pairs of shoes in his life and in the time I was living with him never more than one suit, never took a drink, never went to a nightclub, expressed no feelings about such things, and never once reminded any of us, or so it seemed, never expected any notice of the fact that

*cont next pg*



he was giving us all of the life force that the monster-machine had left to him.

The part the machine seized, that death of the spirit visited upon him by a world he never influenced, was mourned by us, and most certainly by me, but no one ever made a real effort to give him solace; how do you console a man who is unapproachable?

He came to visit me when I was in San Quentin. He was in his forties then, too, an age in men when they have grown full. I had decided to reach for my father, to force him with my revolutionary dialectic to question some of the mental barricades he'd thrown up to protect his body from what was for him an undefinable and omnipresent enemy. An enemy that would starve his body, expose it to the elements, chain his body, jail it, club it, rip it, hang it, electrify it, and poison gas it. I would have him understand that although he had saved his body he had done so at a terrible cost to his mind. I felt that if I could superimpose the explosive doctrine of self-determination through people's government and revolutionary culture upon what remained of his mind, draw him out into the real world, isolate and identify his real enemies, if I could hurl him through Fanon's revolutionary catharsis, I would be serving him, the people, the historical obligation.

San Q was in the riot season. It was early January 1967. The pigs had for the last three months been on a search-and-destroy foray into our cells. All times of the day or night our cells were being invaded by the goon squad: you wake up, take your licks, get skin-searched and wait on the tier, naked, while they mangle your few personal effects. This treatment, fear therapy, was not accorded to all, however--to some Chicanos in for dope, to some whites in for extortionate activities; but mostly, it came down on us.

For general principles. Re-habilitational terror. Each new pig must go through a period of in-service training when he learns the Gestapo arts, the full range of anti-body tactics that he will be expected to use on the job. Part of this in-service training is a crash course in close-order combat, where the pigs are taught how to use club and sap, how to form and use the simpler karate hands, where to hit a man for the best (or worst, depending) effect.

The new pigs usually have to serve a period on the goon squad before they fall into their regular role on the animal farm. They are always anxious to try their new skills--"to see if it really works"; we were always forced to do something to slow them down, to demonstrate that violence was a two-edged sword. The Brothers wanted to protest. The usual protest was to strike, a work stoppage, closing the sweatshops, where industrial products are worked up for \$.02 an hour. (Some people get \$.04 after they've been on the job for six months.) The outside interests who made the profits didn't dig the strikes; that meant the captain didn't like them either, since it meant pressure on him from these free-enterprising politically-connected...

On the occasion I wish to relate, my father had driven all night from Los Angeles alone; he had not slept more than a couple of hours in the last forty-eight.

We shook hands and the dialectic began, him listening, me scorning the diabolical dog, capitalism. Did it not raise pigs and murder Vietnamese? Didn't it glut some and starve most of us? Didn't it build housing projects that resemble prisons, and luxury hotels and apartments that resemble the Hanging Gardens, on the same street?

Didn't it build a hospital and then a bomb? Didn't it erect a

school and then open a whorehouse? Build an airplane to sell a tranquilizer tablet? For every church, didn't it construct a prison? For each new medical discovery, didn't it produce as a by-product ten new biological warfare agents? Didn't it aggrandize men like Hunt and Hughes, and dwarf you?

He said, "Yes, but what can we do? There's too many of the bastards." His eyes shaded over and his mind went into a total regression, a relapse back through time, space, pain, neglect, a thousand "dreams deferred," broken promises, forgotten ambitions; back through the hundreds of "renewed hope shattered," to a time when he was young, roaming the Louisiana countryside for something to eat.

He talked for ten minutes of things that were not in the present, people that I didn't know--"We'll have to take (something) back to Aunt Bell"--places that we had never seen together; he called me by his brother's name twice. I was so shocked I could only sit and blink; this was the guy who took nothing seriously, the level-headed, practical "Negro" work-a-day, never complain, cool, smooth, colored gentleman.

They have driven him to the abyss of madness; just behind the white veneer waits the awesome, vindictive, Black madness. There are a lot of Blacks living in his generation, the one of the Great Depression, when it was no longer possible to maintain the Black self by serving. Even that had dried up; Blacks were beaten and killed for jobs like porter, bell-boy, stoker, pearl diver, and bootblack.

My clenched fist goes up for them; I forgive them, I understand. And if they will stop their collaboration with the fascist enemy, stop it now, and support our revolution, with just a nod, we'll forget and forgive them for casting us naked into a grim and deleterious world.

## We've Got It!

the biiiiiig apple!  
new york!  
harlem!  
daddy, we've got everything here!

rhythm and blues?  
daddy, we've got it!  
are you hip to the  
*world famous apollo?*  
aw, everything everything!

jazz?  
daddy, we've got it!  
the apple *is*  
the black experience in sound.

black pride?  
daddy, we've got it!  
*national this, national that.*  
*national urban league,*  
*national naacp,*  
why  
even huey 'spose to be  
coming *home* to harlem!

black culture?  
daddy, we've got it!  
the black arts headquarters  
of the world, you dig that, the world!  
home of the daishiki.  
Baby, we even got *live* Africans!

(dig daddy,  
hear me brother,  
*dammit nigger!*  
new york ain't shit!  
it ain't yours.  
hmp! you don't own it.)

(piss stinking streets.  
garbage on your front steps.  
skag, hustling!  
daddy, you got it!)

--- Don Quinn Kelley



# Revolt of the Natives

A. SIVANANDAN

*All round me the white man; above the sky tears at its navel; the earth rasps under my feet, and there is a white, white song. All this whiteness that burns me.... --Fanon (1)*

If, as Marx has pointed out, each epoch needs to be examined in terms of categories suitable to it, the category relevant to our own is not so much class as color, which tends increasingly to divide the world vertically -- into white and non-white, irrespective of class. The hierarchical concept of society may help to explain the internal dynamics of particular societies but, as between the West (including Russia) and the Afro-Asian countries, the line of demarcation is the color line. That the color line is also the line of poverty makes the division that much more inexorable. But whether the eradication of poverty by itself can restore the question of color to its proper socio-economic perspective is doubtful. The classless society may conceivably be a "colorless" one, but color and class at the moment have lost their common denominators.

Economic categories, in other words, help to identify capitalism as the common enemy of proletarian and colonized alike, but they do not explain why such a compelling identity of interest is unable to bring them together. The answer is to be sought elsewhere: in the theology of racial superiority with which capitalism, in its colonial phase, sought to rationalize and justify the exploitation of "one thousand five hundred million natives"<sup>2</sup> over a period of four hundred years. In effect it put the white man,

worker and bourgeois, in a class above his Black counterpart and, indeed, above Black people generally. It gave him a fictitious stature based on the belief of the Black man's worthlessness. It allowed him to invest the Black man with every psychological inadequacy in his own make-up. It kept him, in a word, from acknowledging himself and achieving the humanism he so blatantly vaunted. His conscience, in Sartre's phrase, was caught up in its own contradiction.

The native, for his part, accepted the white man's image of himself as "the quintessence of evil...representing not only the absence of values but also the negation of values...the corrosive element disfiguring all that has to do with beauty or morality."<sup>(3)</sup> Black, he realized, was the mark of oppression, the color of non-being. He would ape the white man, accept his values without question, be equally derisive of native traditions and custom, and so escape the prison of his skin. But all his attempts at "freedom" took him further away from himself and no nearer to the whiteness which he had been led to believe was the highest good. In the process his psyche became a coiled, palpitating, pent-up thing, "ready at a moment's notice to exchange the role of the quarry for that of the hunter."<sup>(4)</sup>

The sickness of racism had overtaken the economics of colonialism.

To allege in these circumstances (as the international socialists do) that the racial myth is a capitalist red herring is to obscure the psychological barrier between white and Black which, in our time, has assumed pathological proportions. Capitalism is indeed the prime cause of racial prejudice as we know it

today; but prejudice itself has set up categories which need to be defeated on their own ground. The answer to "white is right" is at least that Black is beautiful. The antithesis of white power is surely Black power. The reply finally to white separatism is Black separatism.

The sequence of action and reaction is clear: the whites act, the Blacks react -- and in terms of history there is no doubt as to where the sequence begins. To which one might reply that Black reaction is at best a riposte to inequality, not an answer to prejudice; it is, in fact, racism in reverse. But then prejudice is not the Black man's problem. His concern is quite simply to achieve his humanity. What keeps him from this achievement is white oppression. The need to oppress, the primitive notion of racial superiority, is the white man's burden. It is he who must choose to lose it. The Black man has no choice.

To put it differently, white racism is at one level a matter of choice, at another a matter of privilege, but at all levels an exercise in oppression. White racism incurs, somewhere down the line, the denial of human dignity; Black "racism" envisages the destruction of that denial. It is "the rhetoric of abstracted liberalism"<sup>(5)</sup> which accords them equal weight.

The romantic fallacy of Soviet Communism, on the other hand, stems from its inability to make a distinction between the oppression of the working classes and the oppression of the Blacks. Oppression, in its colonial aspect, had undergone a qualitative change and had come to wear a different face for each occasion. Class exploitation was superseded by race exploitation. Whiteness came to



enshrine privilege as much as capitalism did: when the chips were down, the white proletarian found himself on the side of the white man, albeit a capitalist. The dialectical confrontation (which makes for change) was no longer that between master and servant, but between white and Black. Color, not class, was the agent of revolution.

On any showing, the class line has ceased to be the color line. But racial conflict, however frightening, is involved with fundamental change, whereas the conflict of class is a game played within the bounds of the existing scheme of things. And yet the Marxist theologians (of the West) refuse to see the distinction. Nor can they be absolved on the ground of innocence or dogma. In the light of their rabid antipathy to China, it is more than likely that they themselves are not immune to the prejudice of color (their animosity to Cuba, they would plead, is another matter: that of professional revolutionaries to dilettantes).

Or else, in embracing Marx the social scientist, they have missed out Marx the humanist -- that aspect of him which informs and illumines every line of his analysis. At the time that he was writing, the proletariat (irrespective of color) was the most alienated segment of society; they were at the bottom of the heap. In their struggle to emancipate themselves they would engender the emancipation of all mankind. Values, Marx was saying, are created from the very bone of humanity. Today it is the Black man who is at the bottom of the pile, and it is his attempt to recreate himself that must lead to the resurrection of man. It is up to the (white) worker to identify himself with the cause of those more op-

pressed than himself.

But such an "identification" requires sensibility and imagination, a notion of one's real need to confirm and be confirmed by one's fellow men, a sensitivity to other people's pain, love -- categories other than self-interest. But, as Marcuse (6) has pointed out, the technological civilization of the West predicates and fulfils the "false needs" of man, needs which "perpetuate toil, aggressiveness, misery, and injustice." It not merely rejects, but outlaws as anti-social, the inner need to be and to become. "The machine process (as social process) requires obedience to a system of anonymous powers -- total secularization and the destruction of values..." It ensnares both master and servant till their mutual dependence, as has already been stated, is no longer a dialectical relationship fraught with change but rather a vicious circle enclosing them both.

And so the revolt of the natives is resisted on two grounds: racial superiority and the cult of technology, and the white worker is doubly lost to the Black man. The latter must seek his allies elsewhere, in people of like sensibilities, in a cross-section of white society which has arrived at the same "programme" as himself, though down a different road -- in the student population, perhaps, of industrialized societies. For they too, like the Blacks, want to be done with the reification of man. Slavery, they agree with Marcuse, is determined "neither by obedience nor hardness of labour but by the status of being a mere instrument." (7) Their lives are equally untenable, ordained and manipulated as they are by a generation of "hollow men." Their aim, as stated on the

posters nailed not so very long ago to the doors of the Sorbonne, is "to call into question not only capitalist society but industrial society. The consumer's society must perish a violent death. The society of alienation must disappear from history." They do not know any more than the Blacks how they will achieve these aims, but they accept that the violence inherent in a monolithic power structure will only respond to violence. Liberalism is no more than a moral sinecure, and serves to mask the "repressive tolerance" of the "free world." Muscovite Communism is hidebound, doctrinaire, and equally lacking in moral content. The students themselves have no blueprint for Utopia, not even a theory of revolution. But they know that the theories which "succeed" are evolved in the process of being acted out, and do not transpire on the drawing-boards of dialectical draftsmen. They know what they must do, now, and hope that the values which engender their revolt inhere in the world they create. Their revolt, like the revolt of the native, is revolt as man.

1 Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (London, McGibbon & Kee, 1968).

2 Jean-Paul Sartre, preface to *The Wretched of the Earth* by Frantz Fanon (London, McGibbon & Kee, 1965).

3 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (London, McGibbon & Kee, 1965).

4 Ibid.

5 C. Wright Mills, *The Marxists* (London, Pelican Books, 1963).

6 Herbert Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man* (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964).

7 Ibid.

## I Know Your Jaws Git Tight But...

Your afri  
can fires  
flame out  
at black male  
men...& burn  
burn  
burn hot  
heat...You  
strike matches on  
thick lip  
ped chained/pain  
men melt  
ing em  
down into the things the  
things the  
nothing boys  
we are un  
eventful niggers  
over fried &  
denied...You  
spit burnt  
toast & sear  
ing truth  
ness & you burn fast/deep fires on  
paper minds...  
& where  
is black love  
re/evolution love & under  
stand  
ing love & chill  
ed budbeer love &  
baby baby please please  
please...

A little rain com  
passion dig it  
kinda love is cool is  
cool is  
cool and can you dig it  
cool &  
baby take it  
slow  
cool....

--- J. J. Jackson

## The Gossamer Poet

For days I dazzled about  
the fragiled gossamer poet  
heavily carpentering tender  
equipment scaffold sweating  
togethering truthful props alone  
tiring busy crossing banging nailing  
adjusting high above his personal corner  
till one day he climbed too sectioned higher  
frescoing scathing scolding words still wet.  
He fastly even brushed one  
in my envious yet already tearful ey-  
ing him toppling shattering into the laughing crowd.

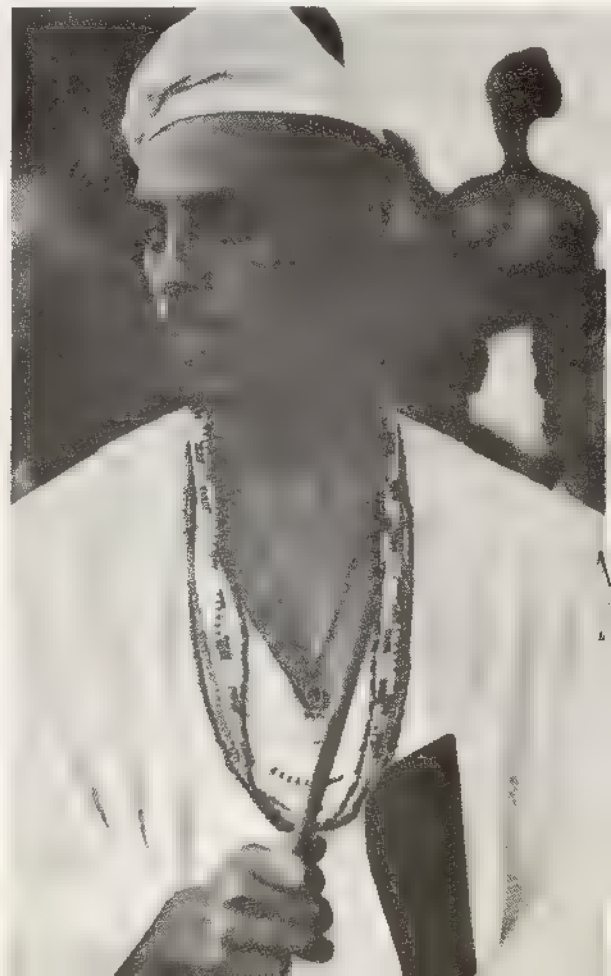
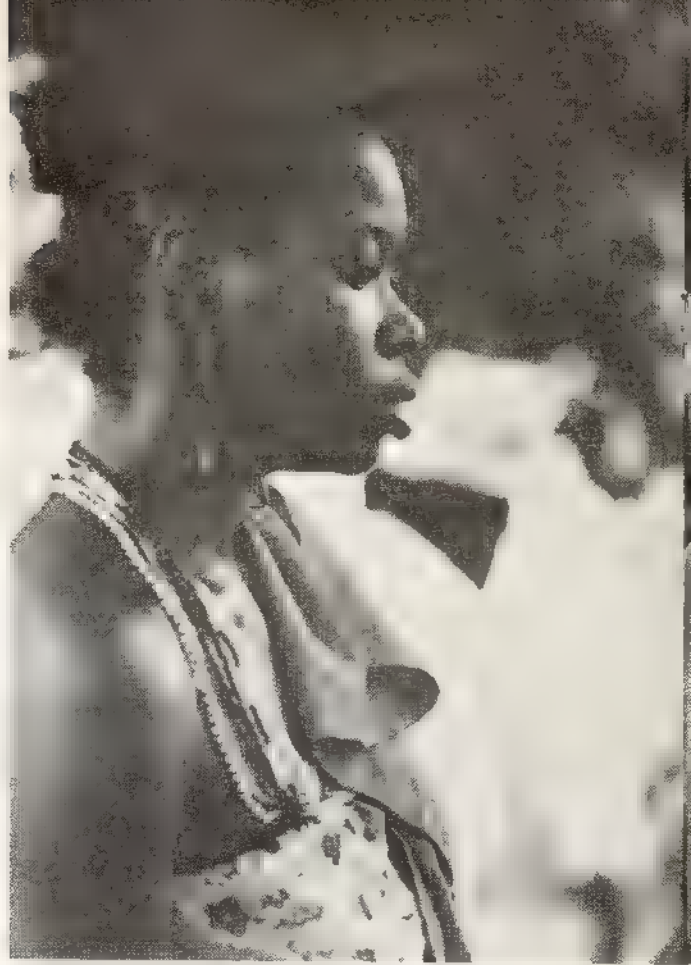
--- Edgar L. Biamonte



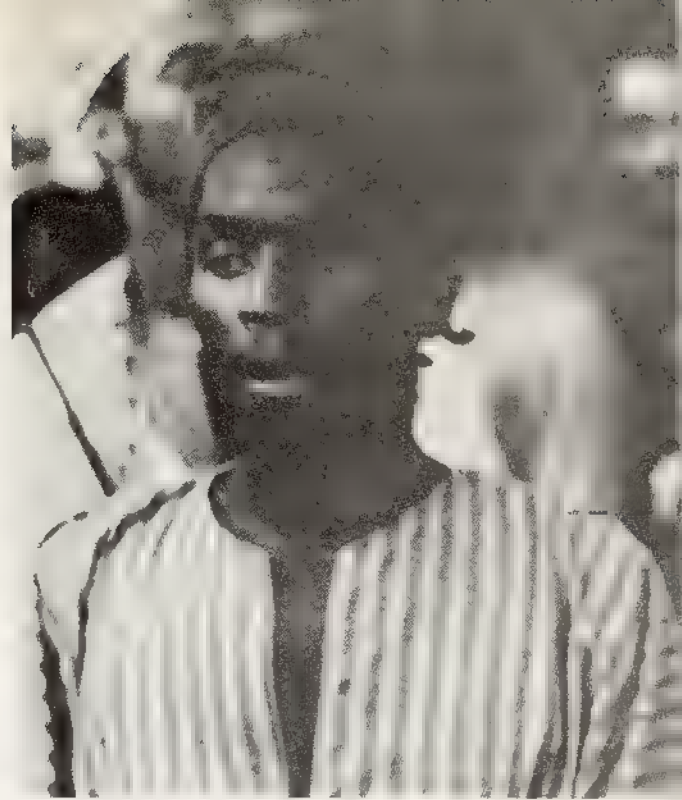
## The Edge

now i know all you young dudes  
figure the hip in loving is the cut  
but really  
the dynamite cop is the edge  
i mean what can you do with a cut  
besides fall in it  
but balance is on the edge  
yep  
there's some slack in the cut  
but the edge is up tight  
ain't nothing but the tight edge  
that makes the cut so sweet  
and it's the edge that she slips to you  
the edge that love gives  
her smile shaping your determination  
the edge of seeing from two directions  
love gives  
hoy  
and don't forget  
the edge over death  
by making life  
that love gives

--- philip m royster







# *Faces at a Yoruba Wedding*

*Richard Reaves, photographer*



Mrs. Ann Allen Shockley is Associate Librarian, and Head, Special Collections, at Fisk University.

## CRYING FOR

*Br-r-ring'*

The alarm clock shrilled like a screaming cat, tearing into her uneasy sleep. She struggled awake, reaching out numbly to shut off the sound. Gray light filtered through the closed blinds, splaying the room with early shadows.

Now the man beside her groaned, turning on the pillow to half open dark eyes to her. "Why you have to set that damn thing every night?" he grumbled sleepily. "Can't you wake without it?"

Fully awake now, she sat up quickly, slinging back the covers. "Sorry to disturb you, dear," she said in mock sweetness, getting out of the bed. "But I set that alarm to get up in time to go to work. *Work*. You ever heard of *that*? To pay *bills*. You ever heard of *them*?"

"Aw, hell. Nag, nag, nag. First thing in the morning, last thing at night. Why you wanna nag all the time?"

"Because I think it's time you got off your ass in the morning and looked for a job."

Suddenly he sprang up, standing glowering across the room at her. "All right! See, I'm up. Up! Off my ass! You satisfied now?" He reached shakily for a crumpled pack of cigarettes on the nightstand.

-- -- She glared back at him for a moment, standing there and dragging heavily on the cigarette in his T-shirt and shorts. He was tall, brown, and strong-muscled with a head shaped with soft black curls. His sex protruded obscenely at her through his underwear, and she looked away, wondering why he didn't go to the bathroom.

"I been lookin' for a job. You know that, Bonnie," he said, the words softer now. "But what chance I got being Black? 'Sorry, we'll call you.' Shit! I'm sick of holding my hat in my hand for a bunch of nigger-hating white bastards."

"You could go back to that cab driver's job with the colored company," she struck back, jaws tightening.

"In *what*? I told you I need a *new* cab. But no-o-o. You won't sign the note."

"An Impala to drive a cab? Flash, don't be ridiculous."

"OK, OK, so you don't see it," he retorted sullenly, watching her go to the bureau mirror. "It really don't make no difference anyhow. I got another deal on. Me and Tex."

The words were there, but she did not listen, having heard them all before. Instead, she looked carefully at herself in the mirror. There were new dark lines encircling her eyes. But the ginger-colored skin remained clear and the soft pert mouth had not yet hardened with telling creases. She still looked young and attractive. She reached for the shower cap, pulling it tightly over the mound of curlers.

"This is a sure thing," he went on, voice louder, as if her unspoken thoughts had challenged him.

*Sure thing*, she reflected to herself. *That means another gamble ending on a sour note with Tex. Why doesn't he try to find a job with a steady income? Anything to help pay for this too-big apartment lined with expensive furniture still smelling new.*

"If you wanna git someplace big in the white man's world, you got to be in the *know*. You got to know how to git in and 'round Mista Charlie. How to git some of that *all* he's got. And I can tell you, he sure ain't going to let me git it through no job."

She wheeled around, facing him stormily. "Why don't you stop? You make me sick always talking about you can't find this or do that because of the white man. I'm beginning to think that's a good old excuse for plain laziness."

He snorted. "Oh yeah, I forgot. You got an ed-u-cation. You can walk out of here every day and be Miss Ann. Go to *teach*. My folks didn't have the money to put me through no college. Nor any high school either. I had to git the hell out on the damn dirt-filled



# HER MAN

by ANN ALLEN SHOCKLEY

people-stinking streets and *hustle*. Morning, noon, and night."

She sighed, for here it was again. "I told you, Flash, my folks didn't have all that much. They were just hard working people."

"Hah!" he sneered, rummaging noisily through his chest of drawers searching for clean underwear.

She felt the ache anew, climbing painfully up her neck to twist sharply around in her head. Slowly she began to massage the back of her neck, thinking of him and the first time she came to this town to teach. She had been fresh out of college, and there was Flash, who drove a cab and was the handsomest man she had ever seen--white or Black. He had all the women crazy about him, but somehow, she had won out over the other myriad paint-colored shadows that always seemed to surround him. Only, no sooner had they married when two months later, he quit his job. The cab wasn't any good, he said. He didn't make enough money. He wanted something bigger.

He came up behind her, scattering her thoughts. His arms went around her waist, drawing her back into him. "Why you worry 'bout bills so much all the time, baby? Let the Man worry 'bout them."

"You realize those weekend parties you like to throw cost money? And--" she stopped, deciding not to add the expensive suits and shirts he liked too. Always the dresser. Thomas "Flash" Jackson. Sharp, neat, cool. Even in the cab.

"You have fun those times too!" he said accusingly. Then slowly he began to push suggestively against her breasts, caressing them lightly. "Aw, honey, I just want you to have fun. Live it up!"

"I would if I didn't have to pay for it."

"But, baby, it ain't going to be this way *all* the time."

*Ain't, ain't, ain't.* The simple lesson in grammar for which she had to correct her students. Sometimes she felt like screaming at him: *Isn't, please say isn't!*

She tried to move away, but his arms tightened around her.

"Let me git that Impala, 'baby," he whispered, muzzling her ear with his nose. "Man can't make no good deals unless he looks like he already got money. Hum-m-m, you'd sure look good sitting in one."

His hands slid over her stomach and down, stayed there, and began a slow movement. "My sweet baby. Let's git a lil bit."

As his warm lips made a path down her neck, the familiar surge of weakness flooded her, warm, deadening, separating her from time and space and eternity itself.

"You know I love you, baby. Just give me time. Come on. Be nice to Daddy. Daddy'll make you feel real good. You got time..."

When she arrived at school, she felt drained and spent. All morning the students unnerved her, and in between the impromptu busy work she assigned them, she managed to slip out to the lounge.

Evelyn, the music teacher, was there doing her nails on her free period. "Well," she smiled, "behold the bride. Or do they still call you that after six months?"

Bonnie sank wearily on the couch, wishing she could look as relaxed and urbanely sophisticated as the lanky mustard-colored woman opposite her. Evelyn invariably made her feel younger than she was.

"You aren't in the family way *yet*, are you?" the woman continued, raising neat eyebrows. "Aren't you aware of the new scientific aid for women--the pill?"

"Oh, Evelyn, stop being sarcastic."

"Not sarcastic--helpful. Didn't you know? I'm the original brown Ann Landers. You do look like something the cat brought in."

Bonnie reached for a cigarette someone had left in a pack on the table. She leaned back, blowing streams of curling smoke in the air. She wished the day was over, thinking of the afternoon classes--recitations and papers to grade.

"How's married life?" Evelyn asked, buffing her nails to a high polished sheen. "From this end, it looks tiring."

"Why don't you try it and find out?" she replied crossly, then regretted it. She liked Evelyn better than the others with whom she worked. Only Evelyn had an uncanny way of fully comprehending people. Like advising her about Flash before she married him. "He's too good-looking, has too many women after him, and not in your league," she had warned half seriously, half in jest.

Evelyn stopped her motions for a moment to look steadily at her. "My dear child, it just dawned on me what you asked. You want *me* to give up my Black independence to be tied down to a man? Honey, hardly any Black man makes enough money to take care of himself, not including wife and children--particularly in the way I want to be supported. It takes *two* to tango with the work for Black folks to do that. So, why should I get married and still have to get out of

*cont next pg*

my warm bed mornings and have a frustrated man run me crazy along with it? I've seen too many of our women go through *that* bit."

"Evelyn--" she hesitated, embarrassed, thinking of Flash and herself. "It's--it's better than being alone."

"Alone? Honey, I'd rather have peace with loneliness than war with company."

"Oh, stop being so hard."

"Hard? Bonnie, face it. The Black man gets stepped on by the white man, and he in turn gets mad and takes it out on his Black woman. Most of those little Black faces staring out at me in class are hits and runs of Black men. They stay long enough to make the women happy, drop babies for the welfare rolls and leave." Evelyn yawned, stretching her arms. "Well, in a way, you can't blame the men. The women let them do it, and that's *one* sure way the men can prove they haven't been completely castrated by the white race."

Bonnie put out the cigarette as a knock sounded at the door. A small ribboned head peered in. "Miz Jackson, you wanted on the phone in the principal's office."

"Thank you." She got up, reaching for her handbag.

"Yes, you're still on your honeymoon. Must be the Mister calling to say sweet nothings," Evelyn chuckled.

When she got to the office, she found out it was the Ajax Furniture Company wanting payment on a past due note. Softly she tried to assure the man that the money would be sent on the next day without the principal's sharp ears hearing. He had warned them against collectors calling at the school. When she left, he did not look up, but she knew he had guessed.

That evening, upon arriving home, she could hear the loud music even before she reached the second floor landing. Unlocking the door, she saw Flash sitting in the living room, tie loosened and leg flung over a chair arm. A half-filled bottle of scotch was on the coffee table.

"Hi, baby. Here's Tex." He motioned toward a paunchy, dark balding man seated on the sofa puffing heavily on a cigar.

"Hello there, Miz Jackson," Tex greeted in a hoarse rasping voice. "Good to see you again." When she did not answer, he asked smirkingly: "Have a hard day? Aw-w-w, guess I shouldn't ask a professional lady that." He grinned at Flash, exposing two gold front teeth.

Silently she went to the hi-fi and turned down the volume, then hung up her coat in the closet. For a long moment, she looked at the expensive bottle of scotch. "Who's treating this time?"

Flash cleared his throat and smiled. "We are, baby. This man's got a tip to end all tips. We'll be up there in no time. I'll have my baby dressed in a mink coat come Sunday. She'll sure look good in a mink coat, won't she, Tex?"

"Sure will. I like my high brown women in fur coats."

Deliberately she turned away and went to the kitchen, noticing the bed hadn't been made. The sink was filled with dirty glasses and a smudge of lipstick grazed one.

"Want a drink, baby?" She heard Flash call to her.

His words were slightly thick, and she knew he had been drinking a long time. "No--" she replied listlessly, opening the refrigerator. The chops hadn't been taken out of the freezer even though she had reminded him to before leaving. She ran a pan of warm water and set the meat in it to thaw.

"Baby--" he began, coming into the kitchen holding a fresh drink. "Tex and me are going out for a while. Going to work on this deal with a couple of guys. Can you let me have twenty?"

Impatiently she started prying the chops apart. "I don't have twenty, fifteen, ten, or five. I'm broke until payday. I even had to charge my lunch."

"Now, baby, I know you got *some* bread stashed away."

"Well, I don't," she snapped, setting the skillet down hard on the stove.

"Look, we can clinch this thing tonight."

"Go on and clinch it. Don't let me stop you." Lord, she thought, *I'm tired. What's come over me--us? I'm tired of being man, wife, and mother!*

"I need the twenty." His tone was pleading.

"And, Flash, I don't have it," she insisted, sounding as if she was sorry and a little glad too.

"It's a sure hit, baby. 250."

"No!" she shrieked, tired of him and his pleading.

He scowled at her, mouth drawn in a hard straight line. Abruptly he swerved back into the living room. She could hear him whispering to Tex, and the man's low answering laugh drifted back to her.

She dried and floured the chops, afterwards dropping them in the hot grease. The hi-fi sound had been turned up again, and she recognized the Ramsey Lewis Trio with its soft off-beat rhythm. She set the table for one, knowing he wasn't going to eat. It would be nice if he ate regular meals with her. The only time he appeared hungry or seemed to enjoy a meal was when they were out to a restaurant. Even then, he looked as if he relished the waitresses more than the food.

When he entered the kitchen again, she could tell he was more than slightly drunk. His eyes were red and he swayed a little. "Tex has to go."

"So?" She turned the fire down low under the pan and put a lid over it.

"You ain't going to let me have the bread?"

Tacitly she brushed past him going into the living room. She stood over the coffee table reading the label on the bottle. *Chivas Regal. Bigtime Flash with high ideas on a beer budget.* Shrugging, she reached for a glass and poured herself a drink. *I might as well, she thought. I'm paying for it.*

"See my sweet wife, Tex?" he murmured, moving beside her. "Got me an ed-u-cated gal."

"Sure did. And lookin' good!"

His arms enclosed around her, drawing her near.



"But there's *one* department I'm real good at you don't need no schooling for. Ain't there, baby?" He winked at the man on the sofa. Tex laughed loudly, slapping his knee.

Flushing, she sipped the drink, feeling it ease some of the tightness within her. She was tired and hungry and wished she was alone.

"I ain't no fool, even though I ain't been to school--"

"Tell it like it is, man," Tex sniggered.

She shifted out of the circle of his arms, put down her glass, and walked stiffly back to the sanctuary of the kitchen. The chops were almost done, and she turned them over.

Within a few minutes, he yolled again to her, this time from the bedroom. "Bonnie!"

Taking a deep breath, she went to him. He was in the center of the room peeling off his shirt and throwing it on a chair filled with others. "You going to let me have that money?"

"I don't have it," she said wearily, wondering how many times she would have to repeat it before he understood. But she knew he wouldn't. He never tried to understand anything he didn't want to.

"You got it," he said petulantly. Then: "Plenty of women 'round here'd be more'n glad to let me have that. And then some!"

"I don't doubt it," she rejoined, remembering the glass.

"Baby, I *know* you can let me have it. You refusing me? Flash?"

She watched him half bend his knees in his favorite stance for peering in the mirror to slick down his hair. Putting down the brush and buttoning his shirt, he walked to the door. "Hey, Tex, meet me downstairs in a minute."

"Sure, man, sure. You got bizness?"

"I got bizness."

When the door closed, he faced her. "Baby, I'm telling you all I need is twenty bucks."

Ignoring him, she returned to the kitchen where she turned off the stove. Suddenly like a springing cat, he was behind her, spinning her around. "Where's the money, goddammit!"

"No! We're two months behind now in the rent."

"I'll git it tonight. Enough for *six* months' rent!"

"Like all the nights you were going to *git* it?"

His eyes half closed into glassy pinpoints. The hands holding her clamped her arms so tightly they felt numb, without flesh and bone and blood. "I ain't one of your damn school kids. Now git me that money--"

"No--Flash. I can't. We need--"

His hand whipped across her face, sounding like a sharp pistol crack, knocking her head sharply to the side. The pain was so intense that at first she couldn't feel it at all.

"Give me that money before I beat the living shit out of you!"

The thoughts rose like foam in her head, soaring to the top in one gushing fountain. *It has come to this! But, of course, it had to. He doesn't know anything*

*else. He was born and brought up in the squalid slums of this, and it's the only way he knows how to act and think and be.*

Feeling his hand move again, she murmured quickly: "The mattress. Under ~~the~~ the mattress." At the words, she almost giggled. *How unoriginal of me to hide it under the mattress.*

A weight lifted from her as his hands released her. The pressure was gone-- the pain and anguish still there. She sank weakly against the wall, tasting the blood at the corners of her mouth, closing her eyes until he was beside her again.

"Still my baby?" His voice was softly wheedling.

She opened her eyes to see him smiling at her while jerking a tie beneath his shirt collar.

"Sure you are," he said soothingly, taking her in his arms now and kissing her. His hands grasped each rounded buttock and slowly began to rotate them in a circular motion. The hardness of his manhood was thrust against her and held there.

And for her, there it was once again. The heady, sensual flowing weakness of being caught in fire and smoke and ice until she couldn't breathe or see--only feel. A dizziness overpowered her, causing her to choke and hate the lack of strength in her femininity. She shut her eyes to him, succumbing to the tremorlike ache in her body, breathing with many rapid timeless breaths while he slowly lifted her dress. Hands smoothed her thighs like hard crawling spiders and tucked into the elastic of her panties to pull them down. The wall was the only thing supporting her now. She heard him laugh low and sure deep in his throat.

The sensation this time as he entered her was intense and new and thundering. She heard the remote groan in her throat and felt the top of his head brushing her chin. Then the explosion. A roaring in her head and a painful blackness drawing an ecstatic curtain over her mind.

Hours, minutes, seconds passed and she stayed there prostrate against the wall after he had gone. Distantly she made out a record playing over and over, and she tried to bring herself together by listening to it. A blues--it was a blues sung by a moaning Black woman:

Oh, the blues ain't nothin',  
but a woman cryin' for her man,  
Oh, the blues ain't nothin',  
but a woman cryin' for her man

The man had gone. And she thought about all the dark specters of men--Black in skin, spirit, and life. kept alive by the phallic symbol. He and all the other disembodied shadows caught in an entangling web spun at birth. She pitied them and all those like herself who could not help the Cimmerian ghosts to become alive except above the murky span of their loins.

Lord, she cried silently, Lord. Then she went to turn off the wailing Black woman singer crying like herself for her man.

## Turn It On...and Up!

...and, perhaps, survive anyway, with our music to sustain us. This counterpointed history that tells the most about where we have been...the journey and the struggle.

If a realm exists, some wondrous range of beauty, for example, that has been at one time or other scorned, neglected, looked upon with shame -- this is Black music. The full spectrum. Entire low-down nasty dirges (Black Snakes and Blind Lemon Jefferson from the jump) and hyperactive sounds from country "break-downs," muted rage in every other note...pure tones of loss, our lives snatched away from the paths of death (continually) while encased in gin-soaked, sandpapered baritones, guitar-playing insanity, boll weevil craziness, or lonesome times shuffling dusty roads in Texas, tuberculosis in the Delta, or blindness sending you and Willie McTell to Atlanta. Looking for work. These things.

Remembering once when I didn't want to know the sound most responsible for sustaining my life. Poet's Wheatstraw. Or where the sound came from. Huddie Leadbetter. Like, coming to Chicago by bus, carelessly, in the freezing winter when the Hawk rides a giant sword. From Tennessee and Yazoo City and all points south, Black men, Black women looking for a life -- finding other troubles. But keeping on, so that *you* could be, could be a song.

Calling yourself the blues. A disguise. So that magistrates and the owners of garment factories would think *they* were the audience when Bessie Smith rose to share the pain. Big Bill Broonzy, deep rumbles of grief, love, traveling brothers and sisters seeking better times.. sending out of Windy City's southside all kinda prayers and declarations. (That we might one day recall.)

And later Otis Spann (call it bloody murder...), Elmore James to "Dust My Broom," or Kansas City bartender Joe Turner, Robert Johnson poisoned (?) in the Delta early enough to silence the voice that shattered reason, sent "purists" running for their money-making wire

recording machines -- his premature grave offering them riches.

*Roll 'em, Pete.*

These men sending us their lives. Agonized throats, heavy loads, red eyes and a monster Jones for some of them who still ask us not to forget where they have been, how they've had to live.

*While some of us imagine that this is not important...wearing white bucks and listening intently to the Four Freshmen, and thinking their rhythm intersects anything we know.*

In redemption on the serious weekends, loafing near the frozen custard jukebox-rockola in adoration of Dinah Washington -- who came to us a queen and left the same way. Following Billie. A nickel's worth of RACE MUSIC gave momentary life to Buddy and Ella Johnson, Little Jimmy Scott (who made us know why he was so afraid the masquerade was over) or Sonny Til in '48 telling us it was too soon to know.

And Big Jay, Willis Gator Tail, Bullmoose Jackson, Lynn Hope, Big Jay blazing up like Black fire and reaching into poolrooms and barbershops where we did our preparatory work, took the Regents for our freshman year at life. As our fingers learned howta...pop.

Soon we went sliding sideways to parties, in the teardrop suits I was not allowed to wear by parents who dreamed impossibly of their son the career diplomat, overcoats draped across our bony frames, suedes shuffling lightly...going through the February night in search of Faye Adams who sang (it seemed) endlessly from "sets" in the redbrick forest of every housing project, luring us on to the heaven of a slow drag with Barbara...Vickie...or some totally silent sisters from the Bronx with big eyes and rumored to be minutes out of the much maligned South.

We recognized just partially what our hip walks, our heavy talk could mean. That our music and our lives were one, interchanging constantly, an always kinda thing.

*Beasley, who was there, too... roaming the Hill district in Pittsburgh while I went looking for my-*

*self beneath red and blue lights in Mount Vernon...Beasley lays it on us that Black music is our NOVEL. Yes, it tiz'*

We can read ourselves into any time or place with a small flip of the reasonably-priced record player. Letting these Black...people tell us what was really going on while plastic historians from Johns Hopkins were preparing texts acclaiming America's humanist traditions.

While the truth was about Bird. And Bird was the truth. Soaring as white night...club patrons wondered why he played "Just Friends" just that way. (And we found out there was no answer.)

As Lester Young and Fats Navarro and Clifford Brown and Max Roach and Miles and Ruth Brown and Louis Jordan...or Jimmy Ricks, The Clovers, The Five Keys, The Flamingos, Billy Ward, and Screamin' Jay Hawkins...came to be what was for whatever reason the basis of our saving grace -- insanity. Our very own superhip schizophrenia over trying not to recognize that heroes were heroes with Black faces wear-one-button rolls, Mr. B. collars, raglans and -- later -- tyrolean hats.

Kings. Who took dope so they might live with the reality of neglect and public ignorance. While we, the destitute, made dreams of their royalty at the Apollo or St. Nicholas Arena.

And were conned into pursuing knowledge at various knowledge factories where we sought to deny our magic madness in Harris Tweed jackets and tattersall vests. And blasphemed by hearing as real Chet Baker's morbid reflections.

There is so much music. Who could mention it all? Our later champions...Trane, Donaldson, Aretha, Otis.... In the music is the earth, the place where we stand. Home. If there is ever to be a general awareness of who we are, we will take children (and ourselves, forever) to turntables to listen to the grandest chronicles a people ever put together.

The Brother says, "Turn the reddio up loud!"

Turn it on...and up.



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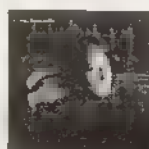
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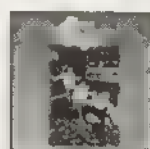
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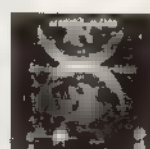
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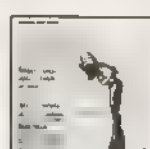
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31799 THREE DOG  
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FLYIN'-A-Gadda-Da-Vida  
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48782 APPLAUSE—  
Original Cast  
ABC LP, 8TR, CASS



30615 JACKSON FIVE  
ABC  
Motow LP, 8TR, CASS



16759 TCHAIKOVSKY  
1812 Overture  
Merco LP, 8TR, CASS



42715 BEST OF MILO  
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66671 RARE EARTH  
Ecology  
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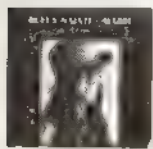
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65775 VERY BEST OF  
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Kamsu LP



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MARIE—Gonna Be A  
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Vangu LP, 8TR, CASS



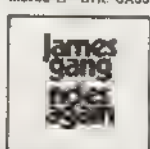
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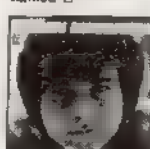
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NASH & YOUNG—  
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66556 JAMES BROWN  
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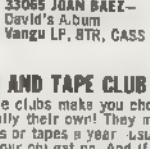
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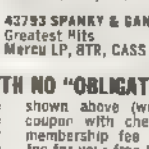
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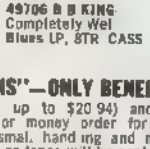
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ORCH., StormyWeekend  
Phill LP, 8TR, CASS



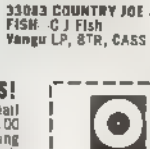
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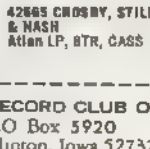
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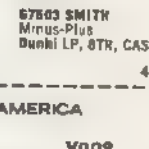
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# Book Review

**Afro-6**, by Hank Lopez. New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1969. \$ .75 (paperback)

The definition of "militancy" among today's young Blacks is moving ever closer to the concept of "revolt." And most followers of this Black revolt movement believe that only Black people are the salvation of Black people, and that the path to revolution is the only course left. Some cite excerpts from Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's *Handbook on Revolutionary Warfare*; others quote passages from Mao and so it goes. But no matter which leaders serve as ideals to the would-be revolutionists, it is generally agreed that Blacks must present a united front with a reinforced revolutionary ideology. There have been numerous works of non-fiction devoted to the subject. Now, most recently, Hank Lopez has given us a spellbinding fictional account entitled *Afro-6*.

While reading this novel, I found myself consistently comparing its makeup to that of a scientific experiment:

**Experiment or Plan:** A highly organized and secret task force--*Afro-6*--to take over Manhattan on October 1 at 6 p.m.

**Object:** To squeeze whitey into a very tight corner; "to shake his system."

**Materials:** The brains and loyal cooperation of 5 Council members representing the Black Power Elite--Level 1; a second echelon of 30 persons separated into 5 groups--

Level 2; 4,680 well-armed, well-trained civilian guerilla troops which comprise Level 3.

**Method:** The isolating of Manhattan by destroying all its bridges and by bottling up the tunnels connecting it to surrounding areas; the knocking of the police communication systems out of action; the kidnapping and holding for ransom of a group of wealthy commuters on the 6:02 New Haven train; the capturing and holding of all headline militant group members who would try to claim *Afro-6* as their thing.

**Results:** Plan executed on time, overall performance excellent; city completely taken over by Blacks for 4 days; ransom collected in form of gold from the Government; police communications repaired, President sends paratroopers in, armed warfare and fires resulting; whites establish an electricity shutoff only in Harlem, further threaten to shut off Harlem's water supply; after 16 days, Black morale lowered, brothers starting to revolt against each other; two council members dead, but three remaining ones believing that they still have a strong nucleus for the next uprising.

**Practical Application:** Though *Afro-6* is a fictional account written in the informal and chatty style of a diary, the author makes some observations concerning the state of the Black revolution today which smell of truth:

(1) Blacks are unable, at the present time, to wholeheartedly pursue a revolt. We can go through the

motions (and in *Afro-6* many of the motions are beautiful in their execution and precision), but as true revolutionists, "we just aren't ready."

(2) We have too many varied and loosely organized groups shouting Black and Beautiful. We have the Black Panthers demanding a total worker's revolution against America, we have Blacks revolting for political power in limited areas where Blacks are in majority, we have Blacks uniting against the oppressions of police brutality, and those uniting against existing educational policies and institutions.

(3) As a people, we are too unsure of our identity and of our loyalties. (In *Afro-6*, note how whites are able to undermine Black morale during the latter stages of the revolution.)

Mr. Lopez' work is hard-hitting. His plot moves swiftly and he does not waste words. This is a raw account of an impossible situation which might one day develop into a bitter reality for Blacks and whites. Perhaps the humor and tragedy of it all is best described by a quote taken from an article in *Negro Digest*, Nov. 1969:

"Saw a dude standing on the corner saying, 'i's a revolutionary.' Wow. But it really is revolutionary to see a dude standing on the corner saying, 'i's a revolutionary,' when all real revolutionaries are either dead or laying dead -- scheming quietly."

--- Jo Hudson



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# Record Reviews

by RON WELSBURN

**Betty Carter. Bet-Car Productions. MK-1001.**

*By the Bend in the River; Ego; Body and Soul; Heart and Soul; Surrey With the Fringe on Top; Girl Talk; I Didn't Know What Time It Was; All the Things You Are; I Could Write a Book; The Sun Died; Please Do Something.*

Please go out and see Betty Carter. Go out and listen to her. And buy this album, her own thing: her production, her label, her designs, her consistency. Dig on her accompanists and laugh at them if you want to because they're still dressed in straight-laced suits (they will move on by you anyhow). There is the steady, sensitive and imaginative bassist, Lyle Atkinson; Al Harewood, who used to back up Stanley Turrentine and Horace Parlan and the late Booker Ervin, the Brother hasn't lost his touch; and there is pianist Norman Simmons, a Brother who is a highly respected arranger but gets little credit and not enough assignments.

At a time when the vocalist in the "jazz" idiom can be easily coerced into the oblivion of the pop-art song scene, Betty Carter remains *par excellence* in all that is Black vocal improvisation. Her control cannot be matched, even by some instrumentalists. One can dare to say that in contrasting great musicians her vocal control puts her head and shoulders over Price and Sutherland. She can scat brilliantly, and at fast tempos her undulating drive never loses its lyricity. As vocalist she is a tenor sax that can reach the soprano range with no problems.

Betty Carter can at best be imitated. She has never, during her career of occasional recognition, sung without feeling and power. Her

resonance is definite at any volume level she glides into or at any rhythmic tempo. An Interpreter of Songs is Betty Carter. If you ever thought "By the Bend in the River" or "Surrey with the Fringe on Top" were corny show tunes, that "Girl Talk" was simply after-dinner jive, her treatments will make you stay down. Young hornmen ought to listen carefully to her style; she utilizes all the elements of craft, from subtones to glissandi. The Sister could send a lot of people back to the shed.

"Ego" is a Randy Weston tune reminiscent of "Berkshire Blues," and with Betty's lyrics. Its subject is personal illusions and it displays how adept she is with the blues chorus. Her style blends "singing" with "rapping" to a point of finesse that makes each practically indistinct from the other. The late Coleman Hawkins made "Body and Soul" the national anthem for Soul folks. Betty's performance here does more than just good justice to a song that few Brothers are familiar with and not many musicians can perform with feeling. She must have had the Bean in mind while making some of those dips into the lower register. She has excellent vibrato on this piece and her pitch is absolutely there. Sliding into "Heart and Soul" sacrifices none of this excellence and is done comfortably, and no doubt with the admiration of Sonny Rollins. When she does "Surrey" you might think of Dexter Gordon or Benny Golson, or a galaxy of pianists—but no other vocalist. Her rhythm section at this point finds it hard to keep up with her.

The Sister makes no attempt to sham and try to be Lady Day; to copy the Lady would be to weep for the Lady and as Betty Carter has so sensitively told us: "Don't weep for the lady... she wouldn't want it that way." (Too bad that song is not on this album!) It is encouraging to have a strong stylist with a distinct touch in an idiom currently in the advanced stages of a war for survival. Sister Betty Carter is setting her own mark. Her style and idiom justify her identity. All Black people got to dig it!

**Human Music. Don Cherry and Jon Appleton. Flying Dutchman FDS-121.**

Any Black person who evaluates music by any contemporary Black musicians runs the risk of imposing on the musicians his own disposition of what and how they ought to create, etc., etc., with all due respects to "the Black experience" and to "Nation-building," etc., etc. As a consequence, the musicians get uptight and lump all "critics" in the same bag. There is probably nothing that would make musicians "tow a line" when it comes to whom they wish to perform with at any given time. And indeed, this perhaps is not the total real problem because Black musicians will ultimately get together anyway and create beautiful sounds. Yet when we think about this "Black experience" and "Black culture" we think of such people as Joe Zawinul or Herbie Mann, and whether we are kidding ourselves if and when we do not appreciate them. All these levels of meaning...

There are a few cases that make us shudder. Oliver Nelson, for instance, seems to be a deliberate arch-integrationist for what are very questionable reasons, not the "ordinary" kind, if that is a fair assessment, of being a respected studio arranger. But Nelson is about the only Black arranger on the scene who has employed white tenor saxophone players in key roles, particularly in the last few years. He overlooked a Nation-full of good and available Brothers to take John Klemmer with him to....Africa, of all places; and he used both Klemmer and another named Gross on his *Black, Brown and Beautiful* (Flying Dutchman FDS-135). The drastic absurdity in this lies in the significance of the tenor saxophone. Archie Shepp so perfectly described it as a "lover" among other things, adding that "its sociology is as Black as the banjo." The cover of Nelson's album has a photo of some fine Black/Brown Raw sugar; the tenor saxophonist used is white. Implications. Symbolism. So what?... Take it from there.



All this was meant to be parenthetical, for the intention of this brief is a record entitled *Human Music* by Don Cherry and Jon Appleton. As we should know, Don Cherry was with Ornette Coleman when the latter took the Apple by storm in 1959, and has since performed with Shepp and John Tchicai, Albert Ayler, and led his own groups in Europe for several years. Recently, he was Composer-in-Residence at Dartmouth, and a colleague of Appleton. On their record, Cherry plays a cornet with a traditional mouthpiece and bassoon reed; also wood, bamboo, and metal flutes, a kalimba, earthquake drums, and emits some vocal sounds; his co-musician, meanwhile, is working out... on a synthesizer.

Together, the two produce moments of interest. There are times when they seem to play cat and mouse, times when they yell, and many times when they pull away from each other to no degree of conciliation.

And then again...

This is supposed to be "Human Music." It is that. It both reflects and betrays two aspects of humanity trying to get it together. Cherry does it with spontaneous genius in a manner related to by most people in most of the world; Appleton had to program his thing, aleatorically at that, before he could perform it. The record mirrors what has been and still is the state of the music world in America, or if one wishes, in America (Black, Brown and Beautiful) and Europe. The meaning of a lot of so-called important music falls into place; for example, what Appleton is doing could be related to by The Mothers of Invention, who actually thought they were coming out of the same South-side Chi-town bag as the American Association for Creative Musicians, when really all their responses and mental patterns had been fixed for them by Antheil, Stockhausen, and Cage. These are, then, easily distinguished as East/African/South Asian-derived music and the dead-end tradition of Europe, the sophistication of a death-bed syndrome. Ask Stanley Crouch.

## Ain't You the One

(an ode to the white liberal)

Ain't you the one who  
chained Grandfather  
whiteman?

You ain't? Well, damn, you sure fooled me!  
You look so much alike you see...

But, then, you wouldn't lie to me  
whiteman?

Ain't you the one who  
lynched my brother,  
whiteman?

Ain't you the one  
abused my mother,  
whiteman?

Mistaken? Well, I just might be...  
You all look so alike, you see...  
You sure you ain't just given me...  
whiteman?

Ain't you the one who  
beat my sister,  
whiteman?

Ain't you the one said:  
"Call me MISTER,"  
whiteman?

That wasn't you put me in jail,  
wrecked my house, refused me bail,  
raped my wife, starved my kids,  
put my brother on the skids?  
That wasn't you, beneath that hood...  
not even the slightest likelihood?  
Well, maybe I just don't see so good...  
whiteman?

--- Theodore

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